Characters

- RUSSELL SHIMA
- BENJAMIN LEE
- ROLAND "ZIPPY" CHING
- RUBY OGAWA
- SHARON UCHIDA
- DONNA WONG

TIME: Act 1, 1957 — 1958; Act 2, 1978

PLACE: Various spots on Oahu

SCENERY: A simple set sparsely decorated. Cubes of various sizes on stage. Upstage area may be decorated with Hawaiian scenes of past years. A couch is used in Act 2.

Act 1

Act 1, Scene 1

Act One Scene 1

(RUSSELL SHIMA enters and addresses the audience.)

SHIMA

Hi. Welcome to Hawai`i 1957. Well, you gotta use your imagination. This is the Hawai`i before statehood. When rock and roll was king but Alfred Apaka was still popular singing songs of Old Hawai`i. When the Royal Hawaiian and the Moana were the best hotels in Waikiki. My name is Russell Shima. Shima in Japanese means "island." Some people on the Mainland like to ask if my name translates into anything. Sometimes I say it means "Turtle rising out of the sea without its shell." They love it.

(ZIPPY CHING and BENJAMIN LEE enter and sit on cubes.)

This is a play about my two buddies — Zippy Ching and Benjamin Lee — and me. Life is good in 1957 when we're juniors in high school, an all-boys' school. The best kind. Simple and uncomplicated. Come on, let's go. Back to that nostalgic time. Silly, happy, and full of memories.

(SHIMA joins his friends.)

Aeh, da dance hall look pretty good, man.

CHING

Sure, wit' all da work we put in. How come I hadda help?

SHIMA

'Cause I was da decoration chairman. 'S wat happen wen you my friend.

CHING

Who said I was your friend?

LEE

Making da stars was real humbug.

CHING

Nah, we only stayed up till t'ree dis morning making 'um.

SHIMA

Okay, okay, you guys, t'anks for helping wit' da decoration.

LEE

No sweat, no sweat.

CHING

Aeh, t'anks for asking us.

LEE

Yeah, you wen' teach us one good lesson.

(ZIPPY and LEE nod at each other knowingly.)

SHIMA

Going be wort' it. Da girls going feel real romantic seeing dis place.

CHING

Aeh, Ben, I like see your kiss-on-the-neck technique.

LEE

Okay, you can get front-row seat. See, you gotta hold 'um certain way, up close, like dis. Den you put your mout' right up to her ear — and you stick your tongue in.

CHING

Aeh, no bull lie.

LEE

'S da way to get da girls hot, I tell you.

SHIMA

How you know?

LEE

I read 'um in one magazine.

CHING

Wat magazine?

LEE

Sexology.

SHIMA

How you wen' get hold of da magazine, you unda age?

LEE

Come on, Russ, you know I planning to go med school. Gotta do some advanced studies, read up on sex and all da kine stuff. Aeh, Zip, I going give you one tip. Wen dey announce da last dance tonight, take off one star and give 'um to da girl.

CHING

Make ass, man.

LEE

Why? Dey like da kine romantic stuff. Den she can take home one souvenir and put 'um on her wall and dream about da tarrific guy who wen' send chills up her back and give her da fever.

CHING

Yeah, den she find out all she had was da Hong Kong flu.

SHIMA

Girls sentimental, Zip. Dey like someting to rememba da best dance of deir lives.

CHING

Our dance?

SHIMA

Of course. Da first dance of our junior year. Dis dance going set da standard for all da dances to come.

CHING

Aeh, you tink da girls going laugh if dey find out I cannot dance?

SHIMA

Nah, no worry. Girls not like dat. Dey kindhearted.

LEE

Yeah, dey not going laugh in your face. Dey going laugh behind your back.

CHING

'S it, man, I ain't coming.

SHIMA

You see? 'S wat happen wen you neva come to da dances last year.

CHING

Aeh, no rub 'um in, eh. Not my fault I was playing cowboys and Indians in my sophomore year. I had one long childhood.

(LEE takes off his T-shirt and throws it in ZIPPY's face.)

Aeh, aeh, da stink, man. Make sure you bafe tonight, eh. I no like da girls faint from lack of oxygen. Phew!

(ZIPPY throws the T-shirt high in the air and LEE catches it.)

SHIMA

So you coming tonight, right?

CHING

I coming but I not going dance.

LEE

Why?

CHING

I told you. I dunno how dance.

LEE

You know. You wen' learn in da nint' grade like us.

CHING

I forget already.

SHIMA

Dance da slow ones. All you gotta do is go side to side. You know.

(SHIMA demonstrates.)

LEE

Yeah, and feel da wahines up.

CHING

Dat I can do.

LEE

Tonight try dis. Wen you dancing wit' da girl, get your right leg moving between her legs.

CHING

Come on!

LEE

Yeah, and make sure her right leg going between your legs.

CHING

No!

LEE

Yeah, man, get you hot.

CHING

Da girl not going get piss off?

LEE

No, she like get hot too. See, you hold her real close

(demonstrates)

and rock side to side. And sometimes forward and back. And make sure you slip your leg in just da right time. See? See my right leg? In, and brush her right leg. Man, she going be so hot.

SHIMA

Yeah, and no forget give her one balloon too.

CHING

One star and one balloon? How she going dance?

SHIMA

Esalay, brah. She hold da balloon in her right hand, da star in her left, and she put bot' arms around your neck.

LEE

Dat way, wen you bring your hands down to her okole, she no can do nuttin'.

CHING

You crazy.

LEE

Well, 's up to you. 'S wat I going do.

SHIMA

Zip, dese girls fast. Seniors.

CHING

Yeah, how come we wen' invite seniors?

LEE

Kaneko heard dey was fast.

CHING

I no trust Kaneko.

SHIMA

Olda women betta anyway.

CHING

But wat if dey tink we just kids?

LEE

Das why, no make ass.

SHIMA

And no step on deir feet wen you dance. And no tell 'um you cannot dance da fast ones, and —

CHING

But I dunno how dance fast.

LEE

No guts, Ching, 's you, no guts.

CHING

I dunno how do da bop. No kidding, I not lying.

LEE

Just rememba, no make ass.

CHING

If I tell da girl I dunno how dance fast, I going make ass. If I try dance fast, I going make ass. Wat I going do?

SHIMA

and LEE: Make ass!!

(ZIPPY tries to exit but LEE stops him.)

LEE

You going enjoy yourself tonight even if we gotta drag you on da dance floor.

SHIMA

Aeh, no mo' time already. Gotta finish cleaning up da place.

LEE

Who making da food?

CHING

Nagatani.

LEE

I ain't eating. Da bugga no wash his hands for nuttin'.

CHING

He not making da food himself. His muddah and sistas going make everything.

LEE

You sure?

SHIMA

'S why dey pick Nagatani. He get four sistas can help.

(They exit.)

Act 1, Scene 2

Scene 2

(The song "Party Doll" by Buddy Knox begins. RUBY, DONNA, and SHARON enter from different directions in casual clothes. They work on their toenails, fingernails, makeup.)

UCHIDA

Aeh, how come we wen' accept one dance wit' juniors?

WONG

Yeah, dey going be uji.

OGAWA

No can help. Actually was one mistake. Janet tought was anodda club and dat dey were seniors like us. Wen we found out, was too late to take da invitation back.

UCHIDA

Really embarrassing. Wat if people find out...

WONG

Cradle robbas!

UCHIDA

Gaawwdd, and from one all-boys' school yet. Dey da worse, man.

WONG

Da kine guys neva know how dance.

OGAWA

'S true. Especially da fast ones.

WONG

All dey like do is dance close and feel-you up.

UCHIDA

Wat wrong wit' dat?

WONG

Sharon!

UCHIDA

Well, 's wat all da guys like do. Young or old.

OGAWA

Yeah, Donna. I bet even your faddah feel up your muddah in deir bedroom.

WONG

Aeh, no talk dirty.

UCHIDA

You know once I wen' open my folks' bedroom door and I wen' catch dem fooling around.

WONG

Dey was naked?

UCHIDA

No, but dey was fooling around, you know.

WONG

I dunno.

UCHIDA

You know, no act so dumb.

WONG

I dunno nuttin'. All I know is wat you tell me.

UCHIDA

Well, use your imagination.

(DONNA tries to imagine.)

OGAWA

Anyway, da guys tonight only one year younga dan us. Not going be dat bad.

UCHIDA

Dey going be uji, but's okay. We can pay for our sins one night out of da year by being good girls.

WONG

Sharon, wat kind position your muddah and faddah was in?

UCHIDA

Wat?

WONG

I trying to imagine dem making love but kinna hard.

UCHIDA

Donna, I neva mean literally. Gawd, how embarrassing to tink you was imagining my folks making love.

WONG

I know. Da next time I see dem, I cannot look dem in da face.

OGAWA

You two getting good fun or wat?

WONG

I kinna worried about tonight. Wat if da guys try grab ass? I going hit 'um.

UCHIDA

Dey can grab my ass.

WONG

Sharon!

UCHIDA

But's all.

WONG

Dey betta not try kiss me.

UCHIDA

Dey can kiss me.

WONG

Sharon!

UCHIDA

But dey betta not French-kiss me.

OGAWA

Look, we not going marry dem.

WONG

Maybe we betta not go.

UCHIDA

You betta not go. I going.

OGAWA

Dis is just one dance. A small, little, innocent dance wit' junior boys who will act like gentlemen da whole night and nuttin' will happen.

UCHIDA

How boring. Ruby, you no mo' romantic spirit, yeah?

OGAWA

I no mo' time tink about romance. I get lotta tings I like do and I no like get tied down wit' one lazy, cheating husband and bratty kids.

WONG

You so clear-headed, I get jealous sometimes.

OGAWA

I know wat I want. And it's not in Hawai`i. I wanna travel all ova da world and meet all kinds of men. I don't want to be stuck wit' a small-minded guy in Hawai`i who like drink beer wit' his friends and go to football games on Saturday.

WONG

You know, Ruby, you so mature for your age.

UCHIDA

And so depressing. You wen' jus' describe my faddah.

OGAWA

I wasn't talking about your faddah. I was talking about Hawai`i guys in general.

WONG

Yeah, Sharon, no take it so personal. Sound like she was talking about my bruddah, Beer Belly Bobby.

OGAWA

So anyway, tonight is only a tiny fraction of our lives, and we going donate it as our good deed for 1957.

WONG

Good deed? Da vestal virgins go to da sacrificial altar.

UCHIDA

Wat if you not one virgin?

WONG

You not one virgin?

UCHIDA

Of course... I one virgin. But I was almost not one virgin.

WONG

Wat you did? Neva mind, no tell me. I make up for you. I neva even let one boy kiss me yet.

UCHIDA

No lie. You frigid or wat?

WONG

Yeah, frigid like one Popsicle. If one boy try kiss me, his mout' going stuck to my face.

(The girls laugh and exit.)

Act 1, Scene 3

Scene 3

(SHIMA enters dressed for the dance. Sonny James' "Young Love" begins. SHIMA practices dance steps. ZIPPY enters.)

SHIMA

Aeh, Zip, you wearing sharkskin pants, eh? Looking good.

CHING

Wat about you, gabardine? Expensive, eh?

SHIMA

Nah, Sears Roebuck.

(LEE enters, wearing a long-sleeved pink shirt with cufflinks and gray slacks.)

LEE

Aeh, Russ, check me out, man. How I look?

SHIMA

Shaka, brah, shaka.

CHING

You get guts wear pink shirt, man.

LEE

Wat? You dunno nuttin'? Pink is da color of da season. Check da pants, man, check 'um out. Gray sharkskin trousers. Pink and gray, da numba one color combination of our generation. McInerny's.

CHING

Chee, Ben, you went all out, yeah.

SHIMA

Ben, you going put da girls to shame. Dey cannot look as good as you.

LEE

See da French cuffs and da cufflinks? My shoes, put your baby brown eyes on my shoes.

CHING

Suede?

LEE

Correct. Suede. Genuine suede.

(ZIPPY and SHIMA go down on their knees to examine the shoes.)

CHING

Man, real nice. Russ, try feel dis.

(The three girls enter in party dresses, full of crinolines.)

UCHIDA

Try look. Dose guys on the floor kissing da odda guy's feet.

OGAWA

Dey not kissing his feet.

WONG

Dey sure must like shoes.

UCHIDA

Or dey really nearsighted.

LEE

Aeh, da girls came, da girls came.

CHING

Where?

SHIMA

Ova dere.

(SHIMA and ZIPPY scramble to their feet.)

CHING

Wat dey look like?

LEE

Look out, you guys, shaddup, shaddup, no make ass.

CHING

Dey no look dat old.

LEE

I told you. Check 'um out, man, check 'um out.

SHIMA

Da one on da left kinna cute.

LEE

Oh, man, da right one really bitchin.

CHING

Aeh, da music not kinna fast?

SHIMA

Wat you like, funeral music or wat? Go 'head go. Take your pick.

LEE

Zip, go dance wit' da one on da right. Tell me wat she like.

CHING

Me? Wassamatta wit' you?

LEE

I no like dance da first dance.

SHIMA

Aeh, Ben, come on, you and me go.

LEE

Wat, you like go now?

SHIMA

Yeah, we go, wat da hell.

LEE

Yeah, yeah, we go, we go. You go, I follow.

SHIMA

No, you go, I follow.

LEE

Okay wait, we go togedda. Step for step.

SHIMA

You sure? Step for step?

LEE

Yeah, yeah, yeah. You ready? I ready, get ready.

SHIMA

Left foot first.

LEE

Left, right.

SHIMA

Wat?

LEE

Left go first, right?

SHIMA

Right, left.

LEE

Wait, wait. Which is right, right or left?

SHIMA

Left foot! Left foot! One, two, t'ree, go!

(SHIMA and LEE both step out with the right foot, eyeing each other. They take several steps as if on a tightrope. SHIMA stops, LEE stops. SHIMA steps out again, so does LEE. They are halfway to the girls when the song ends. They freeze, look around sheepishly, then turn and walk back quickly.)

LEE

Make ass, man, make ass.

CHING

Wat you guys was doing?

LEE

Why you stop for?

SHIMA

'Cause da music wen' stop.

LEE

You always li'dat, you know, Shima, you always li'dat.

SHIMA

(overlap):

Shit, man, no blame me.

LEE

Aeh, I was all set to do my right-leg-in technique.

CHING

I tought you saving dat for da last dance?

LEE

Nah, I ready already.

("You Send Me" by Sam Cooke plays.)

Go, man, go. Go, go, go. Go, Zippy, go.

CHING

Wat?

LEE

Aeh, back me up, back me up.

CHING

Me? How?

LEE

Ask one girl to dance. And no pull one Shima on me.

CHING

I no like. Da t'ird record going be one fast one.

LEE

No, I talk to Kaneko tonight. He said da first set all t'ree songs going be slow.

CHING

You sure?

LEE

'S wat he said. So nobody hold back, like you. Now come on, before dis song finish. We go, we go.

(LEE and ZIPPY move toward the girls. LEE has his eye on RUBY. He looks back and sees ZIPPY wandering off, looking very innocent. LEE looks to SHIMA for encouragement. SHIMA motions him forward. LEE crosses to the girls, still looking at SHIMA. RUBY moves away from her spot a few seconds before LEE turns to ask for a dance.)

May I have...

(LEE is face to face with DONNA instead and is almost in shock. He recovers and shifts over to RUBY.)

May I have this dance?

OGAWA

Sure.

(They go center stage to dance. ZIPPY timidly edges over to SHARON.)

CHING

May I dance?

(He realizes his mistake and is embarrassed.)

I mean, no, ah, I can dance? No, no...

UCHIDA

Hi, you like dance? I do, t'ank you.

(SHARON leads ZIPPY to the dance floor.)

OGAWA

How come most of da guys not dancing?

(LEE manages to sneak his right leg in between RUBY's legs. Then he tries dancing with her in that awkward position.)

LEE

Oh, I dunno, you know.

(Suddenly LEE grabs his right leg.)

OGAWA

Wat happen?

LEE

I dunno. Ah, excuse, eh. I betta go. T'anks. My leg, aaahhh.

(SHIMA helps LEE limp back.)

SHIMA

Wassamatta?

LEE

I get one cramp, one cramp.

SHIMA

You bugga, your leg got all tensed up wen you wen' try your leg-in technique, right?

LEE

Da leg got in dere, man, da leg got in dere.

(The music ends. Then Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" begins.)

CHING

Kaneko!

(Offstage we hear KANEKO's hyena-like laugh. SHIMA pulls LEE with him to dance with DONNA and RUBY. LEE shakes off his cramp and does his best.)

UCHIDA

Oh, good song.

CHING

Ah, ah, you know wat. I like dance da fast ones, but I gotta go because I tink I going t'row up.

UCHIDA

You one real joka, eh, you. Come on.

(She forces ZIPPY to dance. He is all arms and legs, awkwardly stepping on SHARON's right foot, then kicking her left shin. SHARON bends over in pain clutching her shin as ZIPPY accidentally knees her in the buttocks, sending her sprawling on the floor. Horrified, ZIPPY tries to help her up. SHARON rises, turns with her fists up in a boxing stance. ZIPPY raises his arms in surrender. There is a blackout, then time for the Last Dance. Johnny Mercer's "Dream" with the Four Aces begins. Dim lights go up.)

KANEKO

(offstage)

Last dance, you guys! Last dance!

(hyena laugh).

(LEE comes out first, followed by SHIMA and ZIPPY. They grab stars and balloons and give them to their dance partners, RUBY, DONNA, and SHARON, respectively. They dance. As the song ends, the lights go down. All exit.)

Act 1, Scene 4

Scene 4

(Buddy Holly's "Ready Teddy" plays. The boys run onstage, ready for school. The school bell rings and the boys scramble to their cube seats. Class starts.)

LEE

Wat? But Miss Gray, how come I gotta go first? My name is Lee, right? Asato should go first if you follow da alphabet. Oh, okay.

(Clears throat and stands.)

Dis is "Sir Galahad" by Lord Tennyson. "My good blade carves da casques of men." You know, Miss Gray, how come Tennyson neva say *helmets* instead of casques, so more clear? I had to look up *casques* in da dictionary. I woulda used *helmets of men....* Oh, okay. "My tough lance t'rustet sure"... 'S one hard one. T'rustet. He shoulda said "my tough lance can poke da body."... Oh, okay. "My strengt' is da strengt' of ten, because my heart is pure."... Now I tink dat... Oh, okay.

(LEE sits down triumphant. SHIMA rises; LEE mugs with ZIPPY as SHIMA reads dramatically with grand gestures.)

SHIMA

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high, the hard brands shiver on the steel, the splinter'd spear-shafts rack and fly, the horse and rider reel, they reel they roll in clanging lists, and when the tide of combat stands, perfume and flowers fall in showers, that lightly rain from ladies hands. How sweet are looks that ladies bend on whom their favors fall! For them I battle till the end, to save from shame and thrall.

(School bell rings.)

LEE

Aeh, Russ, how you do dat?

SHIMA

Wat?

LEE

Talk like one haole. 'S good.

CHING

Yeah, man, I close my eyes and I tought was one haole talking. Spooky, man.

SHIMA

You guys can talk good English in class wen you have to.

LEE

Yeah, I can talk good English, but I no sound like one haole. You sound like one haole. How you turn 'um off and on li'dat?

SHIMA

I dunno. I just can, 's all. I just can.

LEE

If I get accepted into Harvard, I gotta talk like one haole too.

SHIMA

I hope I get into Antioch.

LEE

Antioch College, no sweat. But I dunno why you like Antioch. Just because Miss Gray went dere?

SHIMA

No, not dat. I tinking of UCLA too or University of Washington, I dunno.

CHING

Me, I like University of Oregon or Colorado State. I tired stay in Hawai`i. Gotta see wat on da odda side of da ocean.

LEE

You, too, Zip, gotta brush up on your English pronunciation. You no like talk pidgin English all your life.

CHING

I know.

LEE

I no like you get embarrassed if da haoles laugh at you on da Mainland. You know how you sound.

CHING

I no sound dat bad.

LEE

'S wat you tink. Rough, man.

CHING

You just as bad.

LEE

Aeh, I neva said I talk like one haole. You no hear me? I said I gotta learn how talk like one haole. And I pity da haoles if dey give me bad time.

SHIMA

Da scary part is we going be leaving home for da first time.

CHING

I hope da haoles treat us betta dan we treat dem here.

SHIMA

(haolefied)

Roland Zippy Ching, follow the Golden Rule and you will be rewarded with the fellowship of good haole friends who will treat you like the prince you are.

LEE

You damn haole, I gotta talk li'dat before I go to Harvard.

SHIMA

If you get accepted, you lolo limu.

CHING

You know wat? If we all go different Mainland schools, we not going stay togedda anymo'.

LEE

I like da way you tink, Zippy, just like Einstein.

CHING

But we been togedda since da t'ird grade.

SHIMA

You know da saying: all good tings must come to an end.

CHING

Who said dat?

SHIMA

I dunno. Somebody famous, I guess. Maybe Shakespeare.

CHING

But why we gotta separate?

LEE

Wat, you like we all go to University of Hawai`i?

CHING

Not me. I gotta go to da Mainland.

SHIMA

Well den, see. 'S life. Wen boys become men, we walk different paths to manhood. Gotta be dat way.

CHING

Sad, yeah.

SHIMA

I wonda wat life going be like wit'out you guys.

LEE

We going make new friends, 's all.

CHING

But no can be as close as us guys now. 'S right, eh? Even if you make new friends, dey not going as close as us guys. I bet you.

SHIMA

No, you win. Not going be as good friends as us.

LEE

We still get one mo' year togedda. Den Harvard, Princeton, Stanford. My destiny awaits.

(He marches out with ZIPPY and SHIMA.)

Act 1, Scene 5

Scene 5

(RUBY and SHARON enter in modest bathing suits, carrying beach towels.)

OGAWA

Come on, Donna. You look silly like dat.

UCHIDA

Yeah, Donna, hurry up. Bumbai dey tink someting wrong wit' you.

(DONNA enters, wearing a sleeveless white blouse and walking shorts, but she also has a large towel on her head, hiding her face.)

OGAWA

If you dat shame, why you wen' come for?

WONG

'S Sharon's fault.

UCHIDA

Me? Wat I did?

WONG

You da one wen' accept one date wit' Roland.

UCHIDA

He wen' ask me so I said okay.

WONG

But you neva have to include Ruby and me.

UCHIDA

Well, he said his friends like come too, so he ask me to ask you too.

OGAWA

No blame Sharon, you didn't have to come.

UCHIDA

Yeah. You was curious. You sorta like Russell, I know.

(SHARON tugs at DONNA's towel.)

WONG

No, no, no, no.

(DONNA scurries away and sits on a platform.)

OGAWA

Donna, take off da towel.

WONG

No.

UCHIDA

Please.

WONG

I said no.

OGAWA

I give up.

(SHARON and RUBY put their towels on the ground and sit to soak up the sun. SHIMA, LEE, and ZIPPY enter, holding paper cups of soda pop. They're wearing swimming trunks and T-shirts.)

LEE

Wassamadda wit' Donna?

SHIMA

Why you ask me?

LEE

She your date.

SHIMA

She not my date. Ask Zip.

CHING

She not my date. Sharon my date.

SHIMA

You wen' arrange all dis, right?

CHING

Not me, not me. Was Sharon. Her idea.

LEE

No lie.

CHING

Honest. Aeh, you know I no mo' guts call her up. She wen' call me.

SHIMA

How she got your numba?

CHING

She look 'um up in da phone book.

LEE

You kidding? Get one million Chings listed.

CHING

Yeah? How many Chings living on Kohalamaunakea Drive?

SHIMA

You gave her your address?

CHING

Well, I neva say 1526 Kohalamaunakea Drive. I just said, you know, we was just talking. And she said she live in Pauoa, and she ask me where I live, so, you know, I gotta answer and —

LEE

Okay, okay, neva mind. Back to my original question. Why Donna wearing da towel on her head?

SHIMA

She probably embarrassed to be wit' us.

CHING

No, no, not dat. Okay, well, I guess I betta tell you. Sharon said no tell nobody, but okay — she shame of her pimples.

LEE

She get pimples? I neva notice.

SHIMA

She no mo' pimples. Her complexion good.

CHING

'S wat you tink, but she get plenny pimples, man. You just no can see 'um 'cause she put Clearasil on her face like Russ. Aeh, Clearasil is good for pimples, right?

SHIMA

I no see Clearasil on her face.

CHING

How you can tell wit' da towel covering her face? Anyway, she using Clearasil like makeup, so she shame. Just no look too hard at her face.

(They proceed to the girls.)

UCHIDA

I hungry.

OGAWA

Me too.

WONG

Not me.

(The boys give the sodas to their girlfriends.)

LEE

Hope everybody like Pepsi.

OGAWA

Oh yeah, t'anks.

CHING

You like eat someting now?

UCHIDA

Well, Ruby and I tinking about getting hot dogs or someting.

CHING

Okay, our treat, you know.

OGAWA

No, no need do dat.

LEE

'S okay, we brought money. We like treat you.

CHING

We go.

UCHIDA

Oh, Donna not hungry yet.

LEE

Russ not hungry too.

SHIMA

Huh?

LEE

He can stay wit' her.

CHING

(aside to SHIMA)

No look at her face.

(SHIMA and DONNA are left alone as the others go off. There is an uncomfortable silence as SHIMA wanders around and tries to sneak a peek at DONNA. She clears her throat.)

SHIMA

Wat?

WONG

Huh?

SHIMA

You said someting?

WONG

No.

SHIMA

Oh.

(There is silence again, but this time DONNA catches SHIMA looking at her.)

WONG

Why you staring at me?

SHIMA

Aaaaaahhhhh...

WONG

Someting on my nose? I know not dat 'cause I already checked. Pimple on my forehead? I don't have pimples so not dat.

SHIMA

You sure?

WONG

Wat?

SHIMA

I mean, no need be shame if you get pimples. See, I get some too. I use Clearasil like you.

WONG

I don't use Clearasil. Wat for?

SHIMA

You no mo' pimples?

WONG

Pimples? No. Why, my face look dat bad?

SHIMA

Oh no, your face is good. My face is bad. I mean, I get da pimples.

WONG

I neva had problems wit' pimples, I dunno why but —

SHIMA

Oh, you lucky. I get oily skin so I put da stuff on, you know, wat I said.

WONG

Oh.

SHIMA

I tought you put da towel on your head because you were embarrassed about pimples, but you no mo' pimples, so... why you get da towel like dat?

WONG

Oh, dat, aaahhh, well, you know, da, da, da sun too hot for me. Sometimes I get sunburn so I gotta cova up.

SHIMA

Yeah, yeah. I get sunburn all da time, and da skin peel like crazy. Look real ugly, yeah. You know wen I peel da skin on my back, feels kinna good.

WONG

Feels good?

SHIMA

Yeah, you know, you gotta get rid of da old wrinkled skin, yeah, so wen I peel da skin, I try see how big a piece I can peel off.

WONG

And wat you do wit' da skin?

SHIMA

I put 'um all in one pile, den roll 'um togedda into one ball.

WONG

Yeah? Den wat?

SHIMA

I eat 'um.

WONG

Aaaauuuhhhhh.

SHIMA

Just kidding.

WONG

You sure?

SHIMA

Yeah, I no eat 'um. I t'row 'um to my dog and he eat 'um.

WONG

Aeeeehhh.

(There is a pause.)

SHIMA

Da guys taking long time, yeah.

(DONNA takes the towel off her head.)

WONG

Ah, da dance last month was nice.

SHIMA

Da dance? Our club dance? It was okay, but nuttin' special.

WONG

Oh, I guess you didn't like our club.

SHIMA

No, I neva mean dat. You girls were really nice. Sorry I stepped on your foot dat night.

WONG

I didn't feel it.

SHIMA

I cannot dance dat good.

WONG

I tought you really danced well. And, ah, I —

(There is laughter offstage. DONNA puts the towel back on her head. SHIMA moves away quickly.)

CHING

How you like da plate lunch?

LEE

Da stew rice is okay, but my muddah's stew mo' ono.

CHING

My muddah make really ono oxtail stew.

UCHIDA

Oxtail? You eat da tail of one ox?

CHING

Get plenny meat on 'um.

LEE

Russ, your muddah know how make stew rice?

SHIMA

Of course, da best stew rice I eva ate.

LEE

You neva eat my muddah's beef stew.

SHIMA

Yeah, I did. Taste like Dinty Moore's.

LEE

Dinty Moore? Come on, man, Dinty Moore? You crazy.

SHIMA

Aeh, aeh, rememba last year before da game wit' Kaimuki, was raining and we ate lunch at your house first?

LEE

Yeah, so wat?

SHIMA

And your muddah wen' feed us beef stew.

LEE

Yeah.

SHIMA

Well, da stew tasted like Dinty Moore.

LEE

You know why, eh, you know why?

SHIMA

No, why?

LEE

'Cause dat time was Dinty Moore. My muddah wen' open couple a cans last minute just to feed us. But you neva eat my muddah's real stew.

CHING

Russ, try look all da meat in dis stew rice. Ono, man.

SHIMA

Yeah, yeah. Aeh, wait. Wat dat?

CHING

'S meat, I told you. Get plenny meat.

SHIMA

No, no, look good. Wat kine meat get feelas and legs?

LEE

Wat? Aeh, aeh, 's one —

SHIMA

Cacaroach. You get one cacaroach in your stew.

UCHIDA

'S one roach, all right. Big one too.

CHING

I tink I going t'row up.

LEE

Aeh, wait, get your money back. Show da lunch wagon da cacaroach. You get one free lunch.

(ZIPPY exits.)

SHIMA

You know, if had one cacaroach, maybe had two or t'ree, maybe had one whole family, and you wen' eat da mama roach wit'out knowing.

LEE

Aeh, wen I was eating one piece, I felt like someting was tickling my t'roat wen I wen' swallow.

SHIMA

Musta been da little legs struggling against your t'roat. So da buggah was still alive.

(LEE hands his plate to SHIMA, then lies on the ground, moaning and groaning.)

OGAWA

Wassamadda?

(RUBY kneels beside LEE, who immediately puts his head on her lap.)

OGAWA

Not dat bad. People in some countries actually eat cockroaches.

SHIMA

He studying to be one doctor, but he kinna squeamish about certain tings.

(LEE turns his head and buries his face in RUBY's crotch area. She screams and hits him. Blackout.)

Act 1, Scene 2

Scene 6

(Lights come up halfway on empty set, like it is dawn. The voice of a white radio disc jockey greets the radio audience.)

DISC JOCKEY

Ah, the sun's rising on Honolulu, and everything's right at K-P-O-I. Today, go ride the surf at Sunset Beach, pick seaweed at Ewa Beach, and be nice to tourists at Waikiki Beach. And you guys just returning from the submarine races at Hanauma Bay, tell me, tell me, who won? Call me, will ya? Okay, right here, right now, a special dedication to the guys and gals who'll be graduating this year. To the Class of 1958, here's the Everly Brothers singing their big hit, "All I Have to Do Is Dream."

(As the song plays, lights come up full. ZIPPY enters, carrying a bucket as the song fades away.)

CHING

Aeh, you guys, come on. Hurry up! Da crabs no can wait!

(LEE and SHIMA carry in imaginary crab nets.)

LEE

Dis betta be good, Zip, dis betta be real good or I going tell your muddah we wen' buy *Sexology* magazine yesterday.

SHIMA

Ah, dis is da life.

CHING

Da life of seniors.

LEE

Den college. Harvard, here I come.

CHING

Aeh, Russ, try look da aku heads.

(They look in the bucket.)

SHIMA

Nice and bloody.

LEE

You sure get crabs here?

CHING

Oh yeah, just wait. Plenny, plenny crabs, all kinds.

LEE

How you found dis place?

CHING

My cousin brought me.

SHIMA

Real peaceful.

CHING

We gotta tie up da aku heads to da nets. See, like dis.

SHIMA

Chee, da messy, eh. Ben, do 'um for me, since you going be one doctor.

LEE

Wat? All dis blood? 'S nuttin'. Dig in, man. Aeh, so long as not your blood, wat you care.

(The three mime everything, including throwing out the nets and pulling in the crabs. ZIPPY is the first to throw out his net into the large pond.)

CHING

Okay, mine is out. Now da net going settle to da bottom, and we gotta wait for da crabs to crawl in.

SHIMA

Stink, man. Gotta use aku heads? How 'bout marshmallows, get plenny in da car.

CHING

No, aku heads da best. All da blood and smell attract da crabs.

LEE

I going t'row mine out now.

CHING

Yeah, good. Wait, go ova dat side little bit, away from mine, spread 'um out.

LEE

Aeh, bossy, eh, dis guy.

(LEE throws his net.)

CHING

Let's go, Shima, let's go.

SHIMA

Aeh, aeh, aeh, take it easy, dis fish head still alive.

(SHIMA finally heaves his net.)

CHING

Now we gotta wait little while.

LEE

'S easy, real easy. I need dis time to rest. Man, I been going like crazy this year. Finally we going graduate.

SHIMA

How come Harvard wen' accept one slacka like you?

LEE

I dunno but I get 'um in black and white. Welcome, honored student, to da hallowed halls of ivy.

CHING

Scary, eh? Harvard. Chee, one million miles away.

LEE

Nah, no sweat. Russ, you going UCLA, right?

SHIMA

California, here I come.

CHING

Good old UH, 's where I going. We go UH, Russ.

SHIMA

Da Mainland schools wen' accept you too, Zip, we go.

CHING

Too many haoles on da Mainland.

LEE

You sure you no like go? Learn from da haoles, learn da Mainland style.

CHING

No mo' nuttin' I like on da Mainland. Da Mainland waste time.

LEE

I going love it up dere. Too many Orientals in Hawai`i. You no can stand out. Everybody look da same. I gotta be da only one different from everybody else.

CHING

You funny, Ben. Wen you go to da Mainland, everybody going stare at you.

LEE

Let 'um look. I no care. Dey see me, one Oriental, dey going rememba me. 'S right, eh, Russ? 'S why you gotta go to da Mainland too. You just like me.

SHIMA

I dunno. Hawai`i is good too, in its way.

LEE

You bugga. You already can talk like one haole now.

SHIMA

If I like.

LEE

Yeah, if you like. You know we gotta be like da haoles or we not going learn. Even Miss Gray told us dat. She said if we talk pidgin English, everybody going laugh at us. If dey laugh at me, I going punch 'um out.

SHIMA

Ben, you smarta dan me, you da valedictorian. Not me. You can keep up wit' da haoles up dere. 'S da main ting. You no need worry about failing. You know you going make A's at Harvard.

LEE

Dat ain't no guarantee, man. And who told dem make me valedictorian? I not going give one speech. Whose bright idea was dat da valedictorian gotta stand up and address da graduating class?

SHIMA

'S tradition.

LEE

Bullshit wit' tradition.

CHING

Ben, you just said you like stand out from everybody else.

LEE

Yeah, but I no like stand out if I sound like one asshole. Shima, you gotta give da speech for me. You know, like one haole.

SHIMA

Forget it. You go up dere and take your medicine. Me and Zip going be laughing it up listening to you.

CHING

Make ass, man, make ass.

LEE

You guys laugh now but just wait, just wait.

SHIMA

Too bad we cannot stay in high school foreva.

LEE

I cannot wait to get out on my own. I tired listening to my muddah and faddah telling me wat I gotta do. I like freedom.

CHING

Just tink. Dis going be da first time we going be separated in ten years.

SHIMA AND LEE

Yeah.

(There is a moment of silence while the boys are deep in thought.)

CHING

Aeh, I tink da crabs ready.

(He pulls in his net.)

LEE

Wat dat? I tink I see someting.

SHIMA

Yeah, yeah, crabs, man. One, two, look, look, four, four crabs in one net!

(ZIPPY dumps his catch into an aluminum tub.)

CHING

Okay, you guys, pull in your nets. Pull 'um in fast, no give da crabs chance to jump out.

(SHIMA pulls in his net.)

SHIMA

Aeh, look. Dere one crab, wait, two, two different kine.

CHING

See da reddish-brown one? 'S one Hawaiian crab. Watch it, no tip 'um ova. Okay, okay, good, good, easy.

SHIMA

Aeh, dis betta dan fishing.

(LEE is pulling his net.)

LEE

Wassamadda wit' mine? Damn, wat I get out dere? One rock, one big lousy rock.

CHING

Dat ain't no rock, man. 'S one crab. Keep pulling, no stop!

LEE

Wat?

SHIMA

(overlapping):

You sure's one crab?

CHING

Yeah, yeah, pull, pull.

LEE

(overlapping):

One big bamboola! Wow!

CHING

(overlapping):

Easy, easy, no tip ova da net. Watch out, wait, okay, okay.

(All three laugh, yell, jump around, having a good time. ZIPPY turns over the crab into the tub.)

SHIMA

Oh man, da pinchas huge.

LEE

Look at da size of da body!

CHING

'S one giant Samoan crab! Dis must be da granddaddy of 'um all.

SHIMA

Da attack of da crab monsta!

LEE

Aeh, da bugga had some good old times, but dose days are ova!

CHING

I told you guys, eh, I told you! T'row out da nets again and we start all ova.

SHIMA

Let's get dose crabs!

LEE

Crab salad tonight!

SHIMA

Crab in black bean sauce!

CHING

Crab guts on rice!

(Buddy Holly's "Oh Boy" plays as the boys throw out their nets. LEE runs off with the tub as ZIPPY and SHIMA pull in their nets. The song continues as the two boys exit.)

Act 1, Scene 7

Scene 7

(Lights up on a spot where LEE enters, wearing a black graduation outfit.)

LEE

And so I say to da Class of 1958, we are da future stars of da Territory of Hawai`i. Let us look to da future, to da brave new world of discovery and achievement. A world of wonda and challenge and, yes, even adversity. But we will triumph and make our alma mater proud as we take our place on da honor roll of responsible citizens of da world. I t'ank you for your kine attention and wish you all, my fellow classmates, a happy and

prosperous tomorrow.

(A loud cheer erupts from the seniors. A male chorus sings "You'll Never Walk Alone." The three boys enter in casual clothes as the song ends.)

SHIMA

Well, we graduated.

CHING

Da world still rotating.

LEE

So wat we going do tonight to celebrate?

CHING

You guys like go McCully Chop Sui get someting to eat?

SHIMA

Or we can go to KC Drive-in. I wonda if Asato working tonight. Maybe we can talk wit' him in da parking lot.

LEE

Yeah, we go KC eat and see Asato. Although I radda go see Ruby. Rememba her? Last year?

CHING

Sharon was nice too. She stay at UH now.

LEE

Wat about your girl, Shima? Wat her name?

SHIMA

She not my girl. Her name was Donna.

LEE

Da one wit' pimples.

SHIMA

She neva had pimples.

CHING

I tink Ruby went school in da East.

SHIMA

She wouldn't go out wit' Ben anyway afta wat he did to her.

LEE

Wat I did?

SHIMA

She probably still mad at you for burying your face in her crotch.

LEE

Aeh, was not her crotch. And I neva bury my face in. Chee, dis bugga. My head wen' slip.

CHING

We go drive around little while.

LEE

Yeah, we go. You drive.

CHING

You trust me?

LEE

Of course. You not one high school kid anymo'. You now in dat ozone between high school and college.

SHIMA

Maybe we can find someting interesting to do.

LEE

Sit in da front, Russ. I be da back-seat driva.

SHIMA

You sure?

LEE

Yeah, I no like sit up front. 'S da death seat.

(The boys arrange their cubes and sit as if in a car. LEE brings out three party horns and hands them around.)

CHING

Where you got dis from?

LEE

My sista's kid had one birt'day party so I wen' cacaroach t'ree. Clean. Unused.

(LEE sticks his head out of the "car" and blows the horn long and hard. He laughs hysterically.)

SHIMA

Where you going, Zip?

CHING

We go down Kalakaua.

SHIMA

'S good. Give da tourists a t'rill.

LEE

Where da haole coeds? Here I am, honey, I am your slave.

(He continues laughing.)

SHIMA

Wassamadda wit' you? You acting like you drunk.

CHING

Yeah and we neva even drink.

LEE

No can help. I get drunk on air.

SHIMA

Aeh, okay, we on Kalakaua.

CHING

Dere some girls on my side.

(All three blow their horns, long and loud.)

LEE

Happy New Year!

CHING

Mele Kalikimaka!

SHIMA

Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

LEE

Hi, honey! Gimme a kiss! I love you! My name is Russell Shima.

SHIMA

Aeh, wat you saying? Make ass, you bugga!

(SHIMA, in trying to get at LEE in the back seat, bumps against ZIPPY.)

CHING

Watch out, you guys, I almost wen' in da odda lane.

SHIMA

How we put up wit' him all dese years?

CHING

No ask me. I figga he was like one lost poi dog. Somebody hadda be nice to him.

LEE

Hi, sweetie, where you from? Wanna fool around? My phone numba is 55 — 263.

SHIMA

Aeh, you bugga, 's my numba. No stop, Zip, keep going, go, go! Make ass, dis guy.

CHING

Ben, she was one fifty-year-old tourist.

LEE

So? Aeh, you guys, I get da mean feeling dis going be da last time I going feel like one kid.

SHIMA

I doubt it.

LEE

I mean it. Da kid days going be ova from tonight. Afta dat, cold reality. Da brave new world awaits and we —

SHIMA

Da bugga giving his valedictorian address again. Lee, no torture us again. Once was enough.

LEE

Shima, was good, eh, da speech. Come on, you da speech guy. Was good, eh?

SHIMA

Yeah, yeah, was good. Your parents were really happy.

LEE

I was in a fog, man. I neva know wat I was saying. Dis is it. No mo' high school. No mo' Hawai`i. Freedom.

SHIMA

You not free yet. We still get four years of college. And you get med school, intern kine of shit, and I dunno wat else. Dis is just your beginning.

LEE

Shima, you killjoy bugga. Dis is wen da boy turns into a man. Hi, honey! How you? Aloha! I love you!

(The sound of a car rewing up on ZIPPY's side.)

SHIMA

Zip, I tink da guy like drag.

LEE

Aeh, we owe you money o' wat? Aeh, brah, you like drag? Scared o' wat?

CHING

Shaddup, Ben.

LEE

'S one real jalopy you get dere. You no can do shit!

(More sounds of a car rewing its engine.)

Give 'um da gas, Zippy. Give 'um plenny. Aeh, brah, wen da light turns green we go, okay? You hear dat, Zip. Go full blast. No give mercy. Dis black beauty can take it.

CHING

I dunno how drag.

LEE

Shaddup, shaddup, you can. Hit da gas, work da clutch, bam into second and give 'um everyting into t'ird!

CHING

I no can, I no can! We go change seats!

SHIMA

Too late, da light turning yellow!

CHING

Ah, shit!

LEE

Get ready! Get ready! GO!!! Ya muddaaahhh!!!

(The sound of screeching tires and hot engines. The race is on.)

LEE

Get 'um, get 'um! Yeah, yeah!

SHIMA

Go, go! Go, Zippy, go! Neck and neck, you bugga!

LEE

(to the other car):

Ya muddah! Ya muddah! We going beat da shit outta you!!

(The sound of a pure jet engine, it seems. And the black beauty roars forward. Both SHIMA and LEE are halfway out of the car, looking back and giving the middle finger salute in the air.)

SHIMA

You did it, Zip, you did it!

(Laughter erupts with cheers.)

CHING

Look out!

(ZIPPY turns the wheel, left, right, left, right.)

SHIMA

Da tree! Left!

(ZIPPY swerves left in time, burning tires as the car screeches to a stop. All three lunge forward and bounce back. There is a long pause of relief.)

LEE

Man, I tought dat was it.

SHIMA

I saw da headlines. T'ree honor students die in wreck on graduation night.

LEE

Benjamin Gee Tim Lee cut down in da prime of life. He was destined for greatness. Wat a waste of a true genius.

CHING

Was one cat on da road.

(LEE grabs ZIPPY by the shoulders.)

LEE

Next time run ova da cat. Get plenny cats, only t'ree of us.

SHIMA

Well, dat was our t'rill for da night.

CHING

Ho, dat was someting, eh. Good fun. Look, I get chicken skin.

SHIMA

I going always rememba dis night. Win one drag race and almost die because of one cat. T'ree guys hanging out togedda to da end. I wonda wat going be like twenty years from now? I hope no change.

LEE

Twenty years. 1978. We going be t'irty-eight den.

CHING

T'irty-eight? 'S old, man.

SHIMA

Farewell, good world. 'Tis a grand time ye gave us mere mortals. We pray your kindness extends into the future of your grateful inhabitants.

CHING

Who said dat? Shakespeare?

SHIMA

I said dat.

LEE

You guys, I wen' just make up my mind.

SHIMA

Wat?

LEE

I going put you guys in my will.

CHING

Wat you talking about?

LEE

I not going forget my buddies.

SHIMA

Wait, I know wat you mean. We wen' almost die togedda, but we wen' live. Dat was da sign. We gotta stick togedda, no matta wat. Friends foreva.

(SHIMA extends his hands, palms down.)

CHING

Friends foreva.

(ZIPPY places his hands on SHIMA's.)

LEE

Friends foreva.

(LEE puts his hands on top of ZIPPY's. Then ZIPPY and LEE exit. SHIMA addresses the audience.)

SHIMA

Well, see you in twenty years. Or twenty minutes if you like. Goodbye, 1958. Goodbye, youth and innocence and high jinks. Look out, 1978!

(SHIMA runs off. Blackout.)

END OF ACT ONE

Act 2

Act 2, Scene 1

Act Two Scene 1

(SHIMA enters and addresses the audience.)

SHIMA

Well, twenty years have passed. Benjamin Lee, Zippy Ching, and I went our separate ways in school and life. There were five-, tenand fifteen-year class reunions, but we never attended, even though Zippy was in Hawai`i all this time. But the twentieth reunion, well, that's a real milestone. You attended yours, didn't you? At age thirtyeight, you just had to go back and see how your classmates had fared in the circus of life. Were they clowns or acrobats? A ringmaster or the guy who sweeps up behind elephants? To be frank, the twenty

years are a blur to me. I was very insular. I found real life boring so I sought out dark sanctums of fantasy. I didn't pay attention to the historical events unfolding around me. One big thing, though, the Class of 1958 went in and out of the army before the Vietnam War got really bloody. Except Ben was in Vietnam, but you'll hear about that later. Oh, oh, I hear somebody coming. See you later.

(SHARON enters as SHIMA exits. She's well dressed in a stylish muumuu. She inspects the living room, making sure everything is in its place.)

UCHIDA

Roland, hurry up, your friend Ben going be here soon.

CHING

(offstage):

Yeah, yeah, where I leave my —

UCHIDA

Too bad he neva come for dinna.

CHING

(offstage):

Wat?

UCHIDA

I said... neva mind.

(She sits and practices several poses.)

Aeh, Ben, howzit, long time no see. No, no. Oh, how do you do, Ben. So nice to see you again after all these years.

(She extends her arm in greeting, smiles. ZIPPY comes out and watches.)

Oh, why, thank you. Oh, oh, please. Beautiful? Me?

(She laughs daintily. ZIPPY approaches her quietly.)

CHING

Wat you doing?

UCHIDA

(startled):

Why you sneak up on me for?

CHING

I neva sneak —

UCHIDA

Walk mo' loud next time. You always walk loud, why you walk so soft dis time?

CHING

Wat, I just walk da ordinary way I always walk.

UCHIDA

No make excuses. And wat you doing wearing dat?

(ZIPPY is wearing a humorous Hawaiian T-shirt with a nostalgic theme.)

CHING

I like show Ben dis. He going crack up wen he see 'um.

UCHIDA

Roland, you not one kid anymo'. Go change 'um.

CHING

No, I like show Ben.

UCHIDA

No, Ben not interested in da kine, you said so yourself. He so haolefied now.

CHING

Yeah, compared to high school days. Like day and night. But cannot help, eh, he was on da East Coast all dis time — twenty years already.

UCHIDA

So dat's why, change your shirt.

CHING

Okay, okay, chee, I no can get some fun o' wat?

(ZIPPY exits. SHARON fusses with herself while looking in a "mirror." The doorbell rings.)

UCHIDA

Roland, da doorbell!

CHING

(offstage):

Go answer 'um!

UCHIDA

But 's Ben.

CHING

(offstage):

So wat?

UCHIDA

You betta go or I not going play in bed wit' you tonight.

CHING

(emerging):

Cheeee.

(SHARON exits as ZIPPY opens the door. LEE appears with a pretty box of chocolates.)

CHING

Aeh, Ben, how's da boy!

LEE

Zippy! Hey, all right! You looking good, Zip, real good.

CHING

You neva change so much.

LEE

I take care of myself, you know. Watch my diet, exercise.

CHING

No wonda you look so sharp. I betta do da same ting. Come inside, Sharon waiting. Sharon! Where she went? Sharon.

(SHARON floats out ever so elegantly.)

UCHIDA

Oh, hello, Ben, so nice to see you again after all these years.

LEE

Sharon, you look more beautiful today than you did in high school. Zippy's a lucky guy.

UCHIDA

Oh, what a sweet thing to say. Did you hear that, Roland dear?

LEE

Hope you like chocolates?

(He hands her the box.)

UCHIDA

Oh sure, we love them, thank you.

LEE

I was in Zurich a few days ago and I knew I was coming back for the reunion, so I bought it especially for you.

UCHIDA

Oh thank you, my goodness, you didn't have to, really.

LEE

Liqueur chocolates. Excellent chocolate.

UCHIDA

Oh, I'm sure. We get tired of eating chocolate-covered macadamia nuts. This is very special.

CHING

Sit down, Ben, relax.

LEE

Yes, thank you.

(All sit. LEE looks around.)

CHING

Ah, you want someting to drink? Coffee, wine, soda? We get everyting.

LEE

No, nothing right now. I just had dinner with some executives of this company. I'm sort of combining business with pleasure. Only way I could make this trip, just so busy, you know.

CHING

Yeah, yeah.

(Pause.)

Oh, I know wat. I go get da cheese and crackers.

UCHIDA

No, you stay and talk.

CHING

No, no, I come right back.

(ZIPPY exits.)

LEE

Sharon, you have a lovely home.

UCHIDA

Oh, thank you. Roland really works hard. He's a pretty good husband.

LEE

I think of the three guys, Zippy was always the one who was going to make a good husband. Russell and I were a little screwy.

UCHIDA

You guys talked about things like that in high school? Marriage and finding a wife?

LEE

No, we were too busy fooling around.

UCHIDA

Lots of girls, yeah.

LEE

No, we didn't have much time for girls.

UCHIDA

I know. Roland said you were the valedictorian of the class.

LEE

He mentioned that? Those were the days.

(ZIPPY returns with a tray of cheese and crackers.)

CHING

Ben, try dis cheese first. Ono. Flavored wit' Portogee sausage.

LEE

No kidding.

(He munches on the cheese.)

CHING

See da tings you miss not living in Hawai`i?

LEE

Where the kids?

CHING

We sent 'um to summa camp. Get 'um outta our hair little while.

UCHIDA

Roland, not dat. It's a church camp. Out by Mokuleia. Geoffrey and Matthew love it.

LEE

How old are they now?

CHING

Ten and eight. Getting sassy, dey like talk back.

UCHIDA

You don't act like a father, dat's why. He acts more like a pal or buddy.

CHING

Cannot help. Ben, you know wat? I took da boys crabbing once. Rememba?

LEE

Yeah, that was great.

CHING

Da kids neva enjoy so dat was it. Maybe dey was too young. Neva get too many crabs too. Not da same like before.

LEE

By the way, we're meeting Russ tomorrow?

CHING

Right. Sharon, dis da first time da t'ree of us going be back togedda since 1958.

UCHIDA

I know. How many times you told me.

CHING

Ben, you know Russell comes back to Hawai`i once in a while, not like you.

LEE

I've been busy. Business, travel. I didn't have time for Hawai`i.

UCHIDA

Well, now that you're back, I hope you return more often.

LEE

Maybe, never can tell.

CHING

Sharon, you ready?

UCHIDA

Now? Maybe later.

CHING

No shame. You da one wen' teach me and den. Aeh, Ben, I get one surprise for you. Try wait, try wait. I get 'um all ready.

(ZIPPY exits quickly.)

UCHIDA

He's been working on it just for you.

(ZIPPY returns after turning on a cassette recorder.)

CHING

Okay, okay, watch dis.

(SHARON and ZIPPY are poised and ready as Buddy Holly's "Ready Teddy" begins. They go into the bop.)

LEE

Zippy! You can dance the fast ones!

(Lights go down on the scene.)

Act 2, Scene 2

Scene 2

(Lights up on SHIMA pacing at another part of the stage. ZIPPY enters.)

CHING

Aeh, Shima-san, you bugga.

SHIMA

Zippy, get your ass ova here. I no can wait all day. How you?

CHING

Same old ting.

SHIMA

Looks like Civil Service agree wit' you.

CHING

Can't beat it. Aeh, I ain't one peon anymore. I supervise lotta people.

SHIMA

Sure, afta all da years you put in. Ben coming, eh?

CHING

You know Ben, always late as usual.

SHIMA

And wat? We going eat lunch someplace?

CHING

Yeah. Wisteria restaurant.

SHIMA

Okay, good. Why you pick da Natatorium for us to meet?

CHING

We used to hang out here and San Souci

(pronounces it Suzi)

Beach sometimes, so I figga good time to come back and see da old hunting grounds.

SHIMA

Sentimental bugga, eh, you. You saw our initials — still on da cannon.

CHING

Who da sentimental bugga now?

SHIMA

Checking 'um out for posterity. How many years our initials been dere now? Someday either da cannon will be gone or our initials will be gone.

CHING

You still reviewing movies for da newspaper?

SHIMA

Yeah, eight years now.

CHING

You no get tired, see so many movies?

SHIMA

No, 's my job. We used to see lotta movies wen we were kids. Hawaii Theater, Liberty Theater, no forget dat.

CHING

Yeah, yeah, I hardly go nowadays. No mo' time. Too busy working six days a week, lotta overtime. Not easy being one personnel manager. People like complain about deir bosses. No mo' end. Headache, man.

SHIMA

But worth it, eh. You get two boys continue on da Ching name, one nice wife to take care of you, cook ono kaukau. No can ask for more dan dat.

CHING

No kid yourself, man. It's tough. Sometimes I like get away, just by myself. Rest da body little bit.

SHIMA

Come to L˙A˙ I take you to Vegas.

CHING

I wish. But you know me. If I lose five, six hundred dollars gambling, I going tink, I coulda bought one color TV or save da money so Sharon can buy one extra freezer to put in da garage.

SHIMA

Da life and times of a dedicated family man.

CHING

You know wat? One night I was home alone. Sharon took da kids to her muddah's. So I took one long hot

bath. Turn off da light, you know, close da door, and just relax in da tub in da dark. Was so good I wen' fall asleep. So I neva hear Sharon come home. She go to da bathroom, turn on da light and see me in da tub. She scream her head off. She tought I was dead. Scare da hell outta me. I told her, "No do like dat, you almost give me heart attack." And she tell me, "Who give who heart attack? Next time you tell me you going sleep in da tub wit' da lights out!" Russ, whose fault was, mine or hers?

SHIMA

Was nobody's fault. You lucky you get somebody worry about you.

CHING

Wait, 's not all. She always tell me, "Put down da toilet seat afta you shishi." You know why she say dat? Because one night she get up to go to da bathroom and wen she wen' sit down, she sink down in da bowl because da seat was up. Ho, she was mad like hell. You tink I shoulda told her, if I gotta put da seat down, den you gotta pull da seat up wen you finish.

SHIMA

No, you betta off if you just shut up and let her have da last word.

CHING

Aeh, wat about you? Good, you know, married life. Wen you going settle down?

SHIMA

No luck, man. I tink wen I'm forty-five, I'll probably marry a thirty-seven-year-old divorcee wit' two kids who will hate my guts.

CHING

Life is hard, yeah. So how long you going be one movie critic?

SHIMA

As long as da newspaper pays me.

CHING

Good job you get, eh. Not like one real job. Dey pay you to see movies. I tought you was going be one businessman or one school-teacher.

SHIMA

Funny, eh. 'S wat happen wen I wen' to UCLA˙ Changed my major to cinema. You know I'm writing a book titled *The Great Ladies of the Cinema.*

CHING

No kidding. Who in da book?

SHIMA

Lillian Gish, Mary Pickford, Greta Garbo, Myrna Loy...

CHING

'S all da old ones. Wat about Doris Day? Or maybe...

SHIMA

Well, she was good for da kine of movies she made, but you know who was great and underappreciated?

CHING

Ah, Debbie Reynolds?

SHIMA

Ginger Rogers. Especially in the Astaire-Rogers musicals of the thirties. Everybody praises Astaire, but Ginger was really special.

CHING

Yeah?

SHIMA

Top Hat was Astaire's best, but *Swing Time* was Ginger's best movie musical.

CHING

I neva even saw dose movies.

SHIMA

No other actress, past or present, can match Ginger Rogers for her all-around talent of singing, dancing, comedic flair, and dramatic honesty.

CHING

Who said dat?

SHIMA

Me, I said that.

CHING

Oh, I tought was one expert o' someting.

SHIMA

Aeh, I'm the expert.

CHING

Oh you! Oh yeah, yeah, 's right, you da expert.

SHIMA

She's great, beautiful, sexy, lovable, funny, touching, sensitive —

(LEE enters.)

LEE

Aeh, who is this woman, I gotta meet her. Shima, Shima, how you doing?

SHIMA

Ben, haven't seen you in a few years, eh.

LEE

Yeah, we gotta get together more often on the Mainland.

CHING

Ben, you checked out our initials on da cannon?

LEE

No, why? Still there?

CHING

Of course.

LEE

What can I say, I'm speechless.

CHING

I rememba wen da Natatorium had some great races wen I was one kid.

LEE

The great stone palace. They gotta tear down this thing, build something useful.

SHIMA

Nothing doing, this is a historic landmark. Preserve it.

LEE

I never liked swimming in there. San Souci Beach was better. When I go back to the Waikiki Sheraton, I think I'll go lie down on the beach.

CHING

I tought you was at your folks' house.

LEE

Had to get out. My mother kept bugging me. Why did I give up my medical practice? Why? Why? Then my father had to sound off. That was it. Pack it up, get out, shut the door. You know the thing wrong with parents? We grow up, we change, but they never change. They still have these old, tired ideas about what is important. And they can't see what we see.

SHIMA

Well, you know, all through high school you talked about going to med school.

LEE

Only because my parents wanted me to.

CHING

Boy, you sounded like you really wanted to be one doctor. Sure fooled me.

LEE

I was a good actor. Russ, maybe I should've gone into acting.

SHIMA

No, no. Terrible profession for an Asian American. No good roles, only small parts with no meat. Very demeaning. Be happy on Wall Street as a stock analyst.

CHING

Wat your specialty?

LEE

My expertise is in the medical field and pharmaceutical drug companies.

CHING

Any hot tips?

LEE

Buy Bristol-Meyers. Good management, good dividend. Can't go wrong.

SHIMA

You know when you visited me in L˙A˙, how come you didn't say anything?

LEE

Tell you what? That I didn't want to be a doctor anymore? No big deal.

SHIMA

But the very next year, you quit doctoring.

LEE

I like my present career. Make a lot of money in my job.

CHING

I can ask how much?

LEE

Six figures.

CHING

Dat much? I gotta raise my son to be one stock analyst too.

SHIMA

Money's not everything, Zip.

CHING

But my boy Geoff like be one TV repairman. I gotta change his mind for him.

SHIMA

Just make sure he doesn't go into engineering. No let him be like Spencer Kamiya. Da bugga stuck in L˙A˙ He really wants to come back to Hawai`i, but the job is on the Mainland.

LEE

I never liked the weather in Honolulu. Too humid, too same. No real change in the seasons. Boring, hot, muggy. Saps your energy. That's why people in Hawai`i move so slow.

CHING

Just my speed.

LEE

Zip, come visit me in New York. The city makes you feel alive. Things are always happening. Busy people walking the streets, a river of humanity flowing along Fifth Avenue, Madison Avenue, Park Avenue, Central Park. We stop along the way and buy hot dogs from street vendors. We go to world-class museums during the day and Broadway shows at night. Lunch at Lindy's, dinner at Sardi's. What do you say?

CHING

Hmmm, I too busy. Get lotta tings happening here too, you know.

LEE

Like what?

CHING

Ah, I get dates for you and Russ.

SHIMA

What?

LEE

Dates, what kind dates? The kind you eat or the kind you take out?

CHING

Guess.

SHIMA

You gotta be kidding.

CHING

I hadda do it, I had to. Sharon wen' blackmail me.

LEE

No blind dates. I gave that up years ago.

SHIMA

We too old for blind dates.

CHING

Yeah, yeah, but dis not blind dates. You know da girls.

SHIMA

We know them?

LEE

Wait a minute, I don't know any local girls. I've been away twenty years.

CHING

You tink I lie to you guys? Wen I say you know da girls, brah, you know da girls.

LEE

Let me think. The last local girl I took out was Margaret Leong. Not Margaret Leong?

CHING

No.

LEE

Phew, that's good.

SHIMA

The last girl in Hawai`i I dated was Julie Yokoyama.

LEE

Yeah, Yokoyama Mama.

SHIMA

Not her?

CHING

No.

LEE

Too bad.

SHIMA

What's this, too bad? You had the hots for her?

LEE

Yokoyama Mama had daikon legs and bow legs, what a combination.

SHIMA

You gotta be thinking about somebody else. Julie's legs were straight and skinny.

LEE

Oh yeah, oh yeah, good, good, tell yourself —

SHIMA

It's true.

CHING

Aeh, aeh, you guys, try tink. Rememba Sharon's friends?

SHIMA

Sharon's friends?

CHING

Rememba wen we first met dem at our junior dance? Rememba wen we took dem to Ala Moana Park for one picnic?

LEE

Her name was Ruby.

CHING

And your girl's name was Donna.

SHIMA

She wasn't my girl. She not married yet?

CHING

Dey both single.

SHIMA

Donna was too uptight. How could a girl with a warm name like Donna have such a cold personality?

CHING

Aeh, Russ, Donna really wen' change.

SHIMA

Who said?

CHING

Sharon.

SHIMA

No thanks.

CHING

You gotta, or Sharon going kill me. Was her idea.

LEE

Zippy, Zippy, they're old now. Thirty-nine, right?

CHING

Well, you t'irty-eight.

LEE

I take out women who are twenty-four or twenty-five, maybe twenty-six or twenty-seven.

CHING

Kinna young, eh, for you, I mean.

LEE

Not haole girls. That's the only kind I date in New York. And the only girl I married was haole. Too bad we had to divorce. She was nice but...

CHING

Well, too late to back out. Sharon already told dem you going take dem out.

SHIMA

And they said okay?

CHING

I tink Ruby and Donna really like see you again.

LEE

But how come they're not married?

CHING

Dey can say da same ting about you guys.

LEE

That's just it. We're guys, you know, guys. Guys need time to sort things out and have some fun.

SHIMA

Zip, I dunno how to thank you.

CHING

Aeh, no sweat, brah, anytime.

LEE

Hot today, eh, Zip. I think you gotta cool off.

SHIMA

Yeah, good time for a swim.

(LEE and SHIMA have ZIPPY by the arms. They rush him toward the exit.)

CHING

No, no, not wit' my clothes on. Aaaaahhhh!

(Lights go down and there is a loud splash.)

Act 2, Scene 3

Scene 3

(Lights up as SHARON, RUBY, and DONNA enter SHARON's living room. SHARON wears a simple muumuu; DONNA is smartly dressed in a pantsuit and wears no glasses; RUBY looks sharp in a tasteful dress.)

UCHIDA

Exciting, yeah? You going meet Ben and Russell afta all dese years.

OGAWA

No, it's embarrassing, it's traumatic. How could you?

UCHIDA

Ssshhh, not me. It was Roland's idea.

WONG

You sure they said they wanted to take us out?

UCHIDA

Yeah, honest. Dey tought it was a great idea. 'S wat Roland said. You shoulda seen Ben, he was drooling at da mout' wen Roland told him you were available.

OGAWA

Available?

UCHIDA

Ah... unoccupied? Unattached?

OGAWA

Sharon, if you lying...

UCHIDA

I promise, I promise. Ask Roland.

(Sweetly)

Roland, Roland.

(Now sternly)

Roland!

(ZIPPY enters, chewing on something.)

CHING

Wat?

UCHIDA

Ben and Russell said dey really want to take out Ruby and Donna, yeah?

(She gives ZIPPY the eye, gesturing and trying to coax him to go along.)

CHING

Oh... yeah, yeah, 's right. I told dem you girls really look terrific.

OGAWA

You didn't.

CHING

I did. But 's right. You two really look nice. No worry, go out. Going be good fun.

WONG

Ruby, what we gonna do?

OGAWA

Go out with them, I guess.

WONG

Where they taking us?

CHING

Well, not going be one double date.

WONG

It's not?

CHING

No. Dey each get deir own idea about where to go.

UCHIDA

Okay, honey, t'anks, you can go back eat.

(ZIPPY exits with a thumb-up sign.)

WONG

I hope he's not gonna take me to a movie. You know I don't like movies.

OGAWA

He'll probably take you to dinner and a nightclub in Waikiki.

WONG

Oh yeah?

UCHIDA

Yeah. And you know wat? If I wasn't married, I could go wit' you guys.

WONG

You take my place then, and I'll stay with Roland.

UCHIDA

Oh no, bumbai you steal my honey away.

WONG

Sharon, you know me.

UCHIDA

I know. I just kidding. You worry too much, Donna. Have a good time. Laugh, laugh, and don't stop laughing. I know going be hard 'cause Russell has no sense of humor.

WONG

He's gonna think it's funny I never got married.

OGAWA

Well, he never got married, either.

WONG

It's different with men.

OGAWA

Times have changed. Women have more freedom today.

UCHIDA

Ruby's right. You gotta loosen up little bit.

WONG

What if he asks why I never married?

OGAWA

He won't ask. Don't be silly. Oh, what the hell. Let's go and make the best of it.

UCHIDA

Yeah, good. You lucky, you know. All I going do tonight is stay home and watch TV wit' Roland.

(SHARON frowns, and RUBY and DONNA give her gentle pats on the shoulder and say, "Aaawww." Lights out on the women.)

Act 2, Scene 4

Scene 4

(Two spots of light hit downstage left and right. Rod Stewart's "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy" plays. LEE and RUBY take one spot, SHIMA and DONNA the other.)

LEE

You know, the first time I met you was at a dance.

OGAWA

I remember. 1957.

LEE

That's why I thought we'd go dancing tonight.

OGAWA

Nice.

(LEE and RUBY dance slowly in place to romantic music. Lights go down on them.)

SHIMA

I hope you don't mind going to a movie.

WONG

Oh no. I... like movies.

SHIMA

That's good. I got the newspaper here. Any particular movie you want to see?

WONG

No, no, whatever you want. I don't care.

SHIMA

Let's see. *Midnight Express.* No, too raw for you, I think. *Coming Home.* Hmmm, no. *Deer Hunter* at the Kuhio Theater. Nah. Wait, here's the perfect movie. I think you'll like it. *An Unmarried Woman.*

WONG

An Unmarried Woman? An Unmarried Woman is the perfect movie for me? I mean, what, because what, I...

SHIMA

Jill Clayburgh was great in the movie and... what? Did I say... no, no, I mean *Unmarried Woman* is not a perfect movie, period. It's flawed, I mean, terribly flawed. Oh, look! *Heaven Can Wait* with Warren Beatty. Let's see that. I saw it already, but it's fun, a fun movie.

(Lights down on DONNA and SHIMA. Lights up on SHARON and ZIPPY upstage, watching TV˙ ZIPPY laughs, pointing at the TV set. SHARON is bored. Lights down on them, up on LEE and RUBY.)

LEE

May I say you look beautiful tonight.

OGAWA

You may.

LEE

And sexy.

OGAWA

Sexy? A thirty-nine-year-old divorcee with ten pounds of rice bags under her eyes?

LEE

Uh-uh. All I see is perfection, from head to toe.

OGAWA

It's funny seeing you again. Naturally, you've changed.

LEE

You mean I'm not a clumsy, seventeen-year-old virgin anymore. You've changed too. You look better today than you did in high school.

OGAWA

Keep the compliments coming. It may get you somewhere.

(LEE reacts with a smile. Lights down on them. Lights up on DONNA and SHIMA sitting in a theater watching the movie. SHIMA laughs and looks at DONNA, who has a glazed expression.)

SHIMA

Donna?

WONG

Yes?

SHIMA

Want popcorn or something?

WONG

Oh no.

SHIMA

I can get you candy.

WONG

No, thank you.

SHIMA

Soda?

WONG

I'm not thirsty.

SHIMA

How do you like the movie so far?

WONG

Oh, it's good.

SHIMA

Charles Grodin and Dyan Cannon are funny, huh?

WONG

Oh yes. Which ones are they?

(Lights down on them, up on ZIPPY and SHARON. ZIPPY laughs, elbows SHARON. Lights down. Lights up on LEE and RUBY.)

LEE

The last time I saw you was at the beach. I got sick on cockroach stew and you were kind enough to lend me your lap as a pillow.

OGAWA

Oh yeah, that's when you suddenly turned into a groundhog and tried to find something buried deep in my —

LEE

Whoa, whoa, I tried to what? You don't think I would, I, I, my head slipped.

OGAWA

If you hadn't stopped, you might've found something you liked.

LEE

Ahhh... what did you say?

OGAWA

Nothing.

(RUBY smiles and moves in, pressing close to LEE's body, head on his shoulder. His eyes widen and he is all smiles. Lights down. Lights up on ZIPPY and SHARON. She has her head on his shoulder.)

CHING

Sharon, you —

UCHIDA

Yes, honey?

CHING

You can put your head up? Kinna heavy.

(SHARON hits him in the stomach with a little pillow. Lights down, lights up on LEE and RUBY still dancing.)

LEE

You know what you said...

OGAWA

What did I say?

LEE

About finding something deep in your... you know.

OGAWA

Isn't that true?

LEE

Well, yeah. But the question is: would you have let me have it?

OGAWA

I was a little surprised then. But, after all, I was only in high school. I'm not in high school anymore.

LEE

Thank goodness for that.

OGAWA

By the way, I like your leg-in technique.

LEE

My what?

OGAWA

Your leg-in technique. Sharon told me all about it. Roland squealed.

LEE

Well, you know...

OGAWA

I like it.

LEE

You do?

OGAWA

Very effective.

LEE

It is?

OGAWA

Hmmm, all that rubbing is making me so...

(LEE smiles wickedly and they exit. Lights up brightly on SHIMA and DONNA.)

SHIMA

Oh no. Now what?

WONG

What happened?

SHIMA

Probably the film broke. Sorry about that.

WONG

Oh no, it's not your fault.

SHIMA

Well, I'm glad you're enjoying the movie.

WONG

Oh... yes.

SHIMA

I was afraid if I took you to a movie, you would think it was like a high school thing.

WONG

Oh no, I, you know, it's, it's fine.

SHIMA

What movies have you seen lately?

WONG

Lately? I've been so busy. I haven't seen many, not lately.

SHIMA

Ah, What're some of your all-time favorites?

WONG

All-time favorites. Oh, I don't know. Ah, you love movies, don't you?

SHIMA

Oh yeah. In my job I see lots and lots of movies. New ones, old ones, good ones, bad ones. And I see some movies over and over again.

WONG

Why? You know the story. It seems such a waste of time to see it again.

SHIMA

It's not a waste of time.

WONG

Oh, I didn't mean a waste, really. I don't know what I meant. I'm sorry.

SHIMA

No, no, let me explain. You see new things in a movie every time it's run. And, of course, you can see a film so often it becomes a part of you. People say it's only a movie, but no, a movie can teach you, it can guide you in your everyday life. Movies are the conscience of our society.

WONG

Oh, I didn't realize.

SHIMA

Most people don't. Now, can I ask you a question?

WONG

A question? Me? What?

SHIMA

Well, tell me, how come you didn't —

WONG

Get married?

SHIMA

What?

WONG

Oh!

SHIMA

No, I was going to say, "How come you didn't eat much at dinner?" I thought maybe you were feeling sick.

WONG

Yes, that's what I thought you were going to ask.

SHIMA

(overlapping, as lights dim):

Oh good, the movie's starting again.

(Lights down, lights up on SHARON and ZIPPY.)

CHING

Sharon, I can feel da heat from your body.

UCHIDA

(snuggling even closer):

Hmmmm, yeah.

CHING

Too hot, you sitting too close.

UCHIDA

Nobody home but us, you know. Ruby and Donna out having a good time wit' Russell and Ben.

CHING

I feel bad I hadda lie to dem.

UCHIDA

Who? Donna and Ruby?

CHING

No, Russell and Ben.

UCHIDA

No worry, dey know know wat dey doing.

CHING

Who? Russ and Ben?

UCHIDA

No, Donna and Ruby.

(SHARON slips her hand behind the pillow that ZIPPY is holding in front of him. She strokes him slyly.)

CHING

Aeh, no do dat. You boddering me. I like see Mary Tyler Moore, my favorite show.

UCHIDA

I feel so lucky. I get one handsome, sexy husband. And poor Ruby is divorced. And Donna neva got married. And I hot, Roland.

CHING

Go get da electric fan. And bring me some beef jerky and diet Pepsi.

UCHIDA

No.

CHING

Wassamadda, I hungry.

UCHIDA

I hungry too.

CHING

Okay den.

UCHIDA

Good, we go to da bedroom.

CHING

But da beef jerky in da kitchen.

(She takes the pillow and hits him over the head, then exits in a huff. ZIPPY watches her leave, then turns to the TV again, laughing. Lights down on ZIPPY, lights up on LEE and RUBY as they reenter.)

LEE

Here we are. Wanna drink?

OGAWA

Oh, you have a view of the mountains.

LEE

From the bedroom I have a view of the ocean.

OGAWA

How about champagne?

LEE

Coming up. I'll get room service. Now tell me. Those lights out there. Where is that? I forget.

(Lights down on them, lights up dimly on DONNA and SHIMA still watching the movie. He leans back, sneaks a peek at DONNA and tries to loosen up. DONNA has her right hand on her lap. SHIMA decides to put his hand on hers. As he moves his hand, she brings hers up to cover a cough. He has his hand on her lap instead. He's embarrassed; so is she. He pulls back his hand, mortified. Lights down, lights up on ZIPPY watching TV˙)

UCHIDA

(offstage, sweetly):

Honey, try come.

CHING

Wat you like?

UCHIDA

(offstage):

I like show you someting.

CHING

Show me wat?

UCHIDA

(offstage, sternly):

Try come and see, I said!

(As ZIPPY exits, he continues to look back at the TV˙ Lights down, lights up on LEE and RUBY drinking champagne.)

OGAWA

I'm curious. Why'd you give up being a doctor?

LEE

Everybody wants to know that. Russ, Zippy, my mother, my father. It's a long story.

OGAWA

I have all night.

LEE

(looking deeply into her eyes):

Okay. You I'll tell. And I'll keep it short. I was in Da Nang at the hospital. Patching up guys, losing guys. The war was going wild. I saw the faces, the bodies, and they just kept coming. No end in sight. I got sick of it.

OGAWA

You did important work there. You must've saved a lot of lives.

LEE

All our young kids dying, and the Vietnamese people suffering so much. It changed my whole way of thinking. See, I like good times, laughs, parties, and spending money.

OGAWA

I'm sure there're doctors who like the same things, but they don't quit.

LEE

But for me, when I got back to the States, I thought it all out. A doctor, a real doctor, should be like those from the country days. They made house calls. They took their pay in chickens or vegetables if they had to. Doctors should be poor but blessed by God for their unselfishness.

OGAWA

Very idealistic, aren't you. But not realistic.

LEE

I didn't want to make money from patients dying under my care. I decided I wanted the finer things in life. And I wanted to make tons of money, but not from poor, suffering people. I wanted to make my fortune from rich, healthy people who can afford my expertise. So now I tell my clients what stocks to buy and they get rich from my advice. It's better that way. Everybody's happy.

OGAWA

What makes you happy, that's the important thing.

LEE

See, money is not the root of all evil. Actually money can bring happiness. For example, someday I'll be a billionaire, I'll donate millions to charitable causes that help poor people. I'll feel good, everybody'll feel good. Yes, it's great to be rich.

(Lights down; lights up on ZIPPY as he runs out in boxer shorts to look at the TV˙)

CHING

Aaawww, you see! Da show ova! You make me miss Mary Tyler Moore.

UCHIDA

(offstage):

Honey, hurry up. No make me wait. I'm so hot. No be mean.

CHING

(beaming):

Okay, okay.

(He stands and pounds his chest and gives out a Tarzan yell, then runs off. Lights down, lights up on SHIMA and DONNA.)

SHIMA

I hope you liked the movie.

WONG

Oh, it was good.

SHIMA

Wanna go some place?

WONG

Where?

SHIMA

Oh, I don't know. Depends on what you wanna do.

WONG

I don't know.

SHIMA

We could stay here and see the movie again.

WONG

Oh no! I mean...

SHIMA

I know. It would be a waste of time.

WONG

It's not that, but...

(He leans toward her to give her a kiss, but DONNA innocently turns her head away.)

I wonder what Ruby and Ben are doing?

SHIMA

Ah, I think Ben said they would go back to his hotel room after dinner.

WONG

Maybe the four of us could go somewhere.

SHIMA

I guess so.

(They exit. Lights up on ZIPPY and SHARON as they enter, arm in arm.)

UCHIDA

Okay, who was betta? Mary Tyler Moore or me?

CHING

I dunno. I neva did it to Mary Tyler Moore.

(She tickles him.)

CHING

I give up, I give up. You da best. You always da best.

UCHIDA

Oh, you didn't have to say dat.

(She kisses him.)

Come on, let's go! Round Two!

(She skips off. The smile on ZIPPY's lips fade to a frown. His shoulders droop, he turns to follow SHARON in tired, worn-out steps. He stops and turns.)

CHING

Wait! I gotta have some beef jerky!

(He exits in the opposite direction. Lights up on LEE and RUBY.)

OGAWA

I think it's time to see what's happening on the ocean.

LEE

Oh yeah?

OGAWA

There's a full moon. We can probably see way out.

(As they are about to go, there is a knock on the door.)

LEE

Who could that be?

(SHIMA and DONNA enter.)

OGAWA

Donna, what happened?

WONG

Nothing. We took a chance you two were here.

(SHIMA and LEE move downstage.)

LEE

What the hell you doing here?

SHIMA

I thought maybe Donna and I could use your room.

LEE

You and Donna? What about me and Ruby?

SHIMA

I thought you'd be finished by now.

LEE

I didn't even start.

SHIMA

Good. I didn't want to interrupt something.

LEE

But you did interrupt. I'm going great with Ruby. You and Donna gotta go.

SHIMA

Why don't the four of us go out to eat?

LEE

I got a delicious dish right here. I don't have to go out.

SHIMA

How 'bout saimin at Likelike Drive-in?

LEE

Do me a favor. Take Donna and go. Any place. I'll pay you to go. How much do you want?

SHIMA

I don't know what to say to her. She's so shy she doesn't want to talk about herself. And I'm tired of talking about myself. I don't think she likes me.

LEE

She likes you, I can tell.

SHIMA

Don't give me that shit. I look at her and I think, she likes me, she doesn't like me, she likes me, she doesn't. I can't read her. I give up.

OGAWA

Ben. Donna asked if we wanted to go out for some food, but I told her we had a big late dinner and we're not hungry.

LEE

That's right. Absolutely.

OGAWA

So Donna and Russell have to go by themselves.

LEE

Yes, that's right. Too bad, too bad.

WONG

Sorry we couldn't all go. It would've been nice.

LEE

Yeah, yeah, great double date. Maybe next time.

SHIMA

Okay. Have fun, you two.

LEE

We'll try. You too. Enjoy your saimin or whatever.

(SHIMA and DONNA exit. LEE and RUBY embrace and kiss. Lights down.)

Act 2, Scene 5

Scene 5

(Lights up as ZIPPY and SHARON enter. It is the next day.)

CHING

I betta not stick around, yeah. You girls like talk private.

UCHIDA

Yeah, I like hear all da dirt.

CHING

You going tell me aftawards, eh?

UCHIDA

Of course. No mo' fun keep da secret all to myself.

CHING

Good, good.

UCHIDA

But you gotta tell me wat da guys say.

CHING

Every word.

(ZIPPY exits as DONNA and RUBY enter.)

OGAWA

Where Roland going?

UCHIDA

Oh, he gotta go shopping for some tings. And I no like he hear all da juicy stuff you going tell me. So wat happen last night?

OGAWA

You're not going to tell Roland, are you?

UCHIDA

Oooohh nnoooo. No can tell boys our secrets.

OGAWA

You promise?

UCHIDA

Cross my heart and shut my mout'.

WONG

Russell was nice.

UCHIDA

Nice? How nice? Good nice or bad nice?

WONG

Good nice. He was a perfect gentleman.

UCHIDA

If he was a gentleman, he wasn't perfect. Gawd, dat Russell is so dull.

WONG

We had a nice time. We had dinner at Wisteria, then went to see this movie, *Heaven Is Waiting.* Later we had saimin at Likelike.

UCHIDA

You don't like saimin.

WONG

Well, I ate it.

UCHIDA

So you neva like make love wit' Russell all naked in bed?

WONG

Sharon, you so embarrassing.

UCHIDA

Wat? I can picture you and Russell making love. Very natural.

WONG

You can? No, no, erase that from your head right now. I don't want to be in your X-rated mind.

UCHIDA

So, Ruby, wat happen wit' you? He wen' try someting?

OGAWA

No. But I did.

WONG

Ruby!

UCHIDA

You? Ooooooohhhhh, wat you did?

OGAWA

I gave him the best sex he ever had.

UCHIDA

He was good in bed?

OGAWA

He was fine. But I had better. Actually I'm sorry Ben's returning to the Mainland. I really liked him. But he has his own life in New York, and I'm no longer interested in living on the Mainland.

WONG

Last night I said some things I shouldn't have. And I didn't say things I should have.

UCHIDA

Me too. I was pushing it wen I told Roland, "Round Two."

OGAWA

Oh well, last night we just donated a tiny fraction of our lives as our good deed for 1978.

(Lights down on the women.)

Act 2, Scene 6

Scene 6

(Lights up brightly as ZIPPY enters in T-shirt and shorts, with rubber slippers. He carries an aluminum tub.)

CHING

Aeh, you guys, I know you tired from da reunion dinna last night, but 's no reason to drag your ass around. Let's go, da crabs waiting.

(SHIMA and LEE enter, mime carrying crab nets.)

LEE

Yeah, yeah, hold on, man, I got a hangover.

SHIMA

Good thing reunions happen every five or ten years.

CHING

Rememba dis? Just us and da dumb crabs. 1958 all ova again.

SHIMA

Kaneko sure changed, eh?

LEE

I think he was an impostor. Nobody can change that much.

SHIMA

Was him. I asked him to laugh. Soon as he opened his mouth, I knew it was him.

LEE

Imagine, Kaneko, the owner of a trash hauling company in Portland, Oregon.

(The guys mime tying aku heads to their nets.)

SHIMA

Funny, the guy with the dirtiest mouth in the Class of '58 goes around picking up garbage.

CHING

Yeah but he might be one millionaire.

SHIMA

He loves his *f*-words. Hauling garbage is the perfect job for him.

LEE

I gave him a parting shot. I said, "If you pick up rubbish for a living, why don't you clean the rubbish from your mouth?

CHING

Aeh, da mean bugga, eh, you.

LEE

Nah, he thought it was funny. He just laughed. That Kaneko has a good sense of humor. If he can laugh at himself, he's all right.

SHIMA

How 'bout Harry Kondo and Michael Kim? I told them, "Come on, who are you really?"

LEE

Yeah, Harry and Mike. How come those guys turned out so ugly? I'm still as handsome as I was in high school, right?

SHIMA

Even prettier.

CHING

Okay, my net going out.

LEE

Go, man, let 'um fly.

(ZIPPY "throws" out his net, followed by LEE, then SHIMA.)

Place hasn't changed much.

SHIMA

Zip, good idea you had coming back here.

CHING

For old times, eh. Ben, how come you neva bring Ruby to da re-union dinna?

LEE

Ruby? No, she's a busy, independent woman. My kind of woman.

CHING

Hear dat, Shima? Da bugga hooked, maybe.

LEE

No, not me.

CHING

Come on, you can tell us.

LEE

Tell you what?

CHING

About you and Ruby dat night, dat hot and sweaty night. Ruby told Sharon everyting. And Sharon told me. I wen' drag da secret outta her.

LEE

Told you what?

CHING

Dat you and Ruby were burning da bed all night.

LEE

Ruby. That woman has no shame. She was great. Unbridled passion. Never had an Oriental woman make love like that. Real savage. I told her I wanted to take her back to New York with me. But she said she had enough of the Mainland. Hawai`i was where she wanted to stay. So that was quick. I can't stand the Islands, and she hates the Mainland.

SHIMA

Donna said anything to Sharon?

CHING

No. Well, she said you were a perfect gentleman.

SHIMA

Yeah, I treated her with respect.

CHING

But, you know, she said she really liked you.

SHIMA

She did? Why the hell didn't she show it? We could've had so much fun if she, she...

CHING

'S why hard, yeah.

LEE

Aeh, don't mope around all day, Shima, not good for the crabs.

SHIMA

Yeah, yeah, how 'bout the nets?

CHING

Full of crabs, I bet.

LEE

Me first.

(LEE pulls in his net and it's empty.)

LEE

What happen? Nothing.

CHING

Maybe da net was turned ova.

LEE

No, I did it right. I did my job.

CHING

I try mine.

(ZIPPY pulls in his net. Nothing.)

SHIMA

How come, eh. Yours empty too.

(SHIMA tries his net.)

LEE

Zero. So we came here for nothing. I should've stayed in bed. What a dumb idea.

CHING

You know, I tought for old times, you guys like come back again. You rememba, was good fun dat time.

LEE

Yeah, but we ain't kids anymore. I got better things to do.

CHING

See da rubbish? Lotta people must be coming. Taking all da crabs. I going try da odda side. Try wait.

(ZIPPY exits.)

SHIMA

Don't make Zippy feel bad.

LEE

About what?

SHIMA

The crabs. Not his fault.

LEE

Yeah, he means well. Maybe I shouldn't have come back for the re-union. I got nothing in common with those guys. Hawai`i just doesn't do it for me anymore. Remember how badly we wanted to get to the Mainland. Hawai`i was too small to hold our ambitions.

SHIMA

Maybe we should've stayed in Hawai`i.

LEE

Nah, don't think that way. It's a trap, a nostalgic trap. Let's face it. We both belong on the Mainland now. Hawai`i is Paradise Lost.

SHIMA

You say that, but lotta haoles move to Hawai`i from the Mainland. They see something in Hawai`i they don't get on the Mainland.

LEE

Who knows why? Maybe they're running away from something.

SHIMA

Like us? We had something once. Right here in Hawai`i.

LEE

Russ, it's a different world now. A different time. What we had we lost. Even the three of us aren't as close as we were in high school.

SHIMA

Of course. We moved away. But if we had stayed in Hawai`i, the three of us would still be close.

LEE

I don't think so. You forget we were beginning to pull apart late in our senior year. We were going to take different paths in life. We learn new things, we make new friends. We don't have the same interests, so there's nothing to talk about, except the old days and that gets really old really fast.

SHIMA

In school I thought we were close to the end. Graduation night the three of us went out together.

LEE

Yeah, but we never confided in each other in school.

SHIMA

Sure we did.

LEE

No, we never told each other intimate secrets, things that touched on our vulnerability.

SHIMA

What do you want — True Confessions?

LEE

Listen, I told Ruby something the other night I never told you, Zip, or even my parents.

SHIMA

Yeah? Why Ruby?

LEE

I don't know. I think maybe if you can share an intimacy like sex with a woman, you're free to share other intimacies.

SHIMA

You told her this secret before or after you had sex?

LEE

Before.

SHIMA

Okay, you tell Ruby your innermost feelings to show how vulnerable you are. You open up to her 'cause you want her to open up — in bed.

LEE

Aeh, I was sincere.

SHIMA

I know you, Ben, you're not the sensitive, sincere type.

LEE

I've changed, man. I told Ruby the truth.

SHIMA

If you wanna play the truth game, admit you hate New York.

LEE

I love New York. I belong in the Big Apple.

SHIMA

Hell, New York doesn't give a damn about you. So, okay, I can say I love L˙A˙, but does L˙A˙ love me back? No.

LEE

I can't help it if you wanna be an unknown critic on a rinky-dink alternative newspaper. At least I make a lotta money.

SHIMA

Ben, I'm the best film critic in L˙A˙ The absolute best. I know it and I'm happy and I love what I'm doing. All the money you make don't mean shit to me.

LEE

Hey, I never said you were a bad critic, did I?

SHIMA

You know, you really did change.

LEE

Of course I've changed. Man, I had to change. Survival. That's the whole point. Shima, you and me, we hadda

change. Life on the Mainland is more cutthroat with the haoles. You know that. The haoles aren't gonna sit back and let you take their jobs without a fight. They don't want you taking over their turf. So I learn to deal the cards with my back to the wall. I play the game according to their rules. I talk like them, I walk like them, hell, I even think like them. And don't make like you're different from me.

SHIMA

You know what the catch is? We don't belong in New York or L˙A˙ And we don't belong in Hawai`i anymore. We're displaced persons. Out in limbo. Neither here nor there. Sure, we try to fit in, we make believe like we're haoles, but the haoles will always look at us like we're foreigners, aliens with funny eyes and yellow skin living in their white society. I don't know if it's worth it. Pretending we're something that we're not. Maybe what we were searching for was in Hawai`i all along.

(ZIPPY returns.)

LEE

You gotta be kidding. Getting out of Hawai`i was the smartest thing I ever did. Any place is better than here. You know how small-minded people here are. How dull, how pathetic —

SHIMA

Yeah, maybe I did think that when I was in high school but not now.... Caught anything, Zip?

CHING

Nah. Just one small one, not wort' it, so I t'rew 'um back.

LEE

See, look at Zip. Who knows what he might've become if he had gone to the Mainland like us? Right, Zip? You had the potential. Why didn't you go to the Mainland too?

CHING

I liked Hawai`i, so I stayed home.

LEE

Yeah, sure, but you know what I mean. If you'd gone to the Mainland, you'd be a different person than what you are now. Would've been good for you. Broaden your horizon, that sort of thing.

CHING

I did okay here.

LEE

Yeah, yeah, but, you know, this is still Hawai`i, not the Mainland, where the big boys play. Understand? You lost out by not going up with Russ and me.

CHING

So I can be like you? No, t'anks.

LEE

Hey, all I'm saying is, too bad you didn't go to the Mainland with us.

CHING

I neva liked da Mainland.

LEE

I know you wanted to go with us.

SHIMA

No, Ben, I remember. Zip always had the UH in mind.

LEE

No, you forget. In our junior year he was hot to go to a Mainland school. In his senior year he had to change his mind.

CHING

You know you really full a shit. You go to da Mainland and you tink you hot stuff. You not betta dan me, you know dat? You not betta dan me.

LEE

Wait, wait, I never said that.

CHING

Guys like you, I dunno wat happen wen you go to da Mainland. You gotta feel superior or someting. Why? Dis ain't no hick town. I dunno why guys like you tink —

LEE

What do you mean, guys like me, what the hell —

CHING

You come back talking good English, ain't no big ting, brah. We all can do dat. You proud of da fact you work wit' all da haoles up dere? Make you feel like one big shot? I tell you someting, we get plenny haoles here too, or you forget dat?

LEE

All I said was you wanted to go to the Mainland too, so don't give me that crap. What the hell you getting so hot about? I'm just stating a fact: Your father got sick, so your mother said you had to stay in Hawai`i to help her and your sister.

SHIMA

You got it wrong, Ben.

LEE

No, no, dammit, don't lie to me, Zip. I know. So you couldn't go to the Mainland, so you had to stay home and help care for your father. So you didn't have the money for a Mainland school. I feel for you because I know how badly you wanted to go with us.

SHIMA

Who told you that?

LEE

His mother bumped into my mother and told her. Twenty years ago. Your mother felt sorry for you, Zip. She felt bad, but, you know.... You didn't want to tell us, that's up to you, wasn't my business, you wanna keep it a secret.

CHING

No feel sorry for me. 'Cause you da one gotta feel sorry. And I'm gonna tell you this in good English, so you can understand. I'm glad now I didn't go to the Mainland, not if I had to turn out like you. I got a good family, lots of friends and relatives around me. I got a good life, I got more than you'll ever have. Go back to the Mainland with all your haole girlfriends and your haole lifestyle. Who cares about that kind of life? Who wants it? Big deal, big shot. Do Hawai`i a favor. Don't come back, we don't need you.

(ZIPPY exits.)

SHIMA

I don't know, I don't know.

LEE

You don't know what?

SHIMA

Why did I come back for the reunion?

LEE

That's what I said.

SHIMA

I think it's time to return to the Mainland.

LEE

When you leaving?

SHIMA

Day after tomorrow.

LEE

I'm flying out tomorrow afternoon.

SHIMA

Well, let me know if you come to L˙A˙

LEE

Ditto for you in New York.

SHIMA

Good.

LEE

I guess we'll never see each other in Hawai`i again.

SHIMA

You never know.

(LEE exits in the opposite direction from ZIPPY. SHIMA addresses the audience.)

When I left Hawai`i, I thought I'd study on the Mainland and come home to Honolulu to work. But then, things started twisting out of shape. The Mainland says: "Stick around, we have jobs. You don't have to go home again. Make a life here." And guess what? Now I've lived longer on the Mainland than in Hawai`i. That's scary. And then there's friendship, a fragile thing. You gotta keep working at it or it'll evaporate when you're not looking. Or if it breaks apart, what a mess. Sometimes, like Humpty Dumpty, you can't put it back together again. But with a little work and patience, friendship can be patched up. Unless friendship is only an illusion. But ours was real. It was born in the fabulous fifties when the world shook with rock and roll. Now life in the fifties wasn't as innocent and carefree as my nostalgic mind likes to think. There was the Korean War, the McCarthy hearings, and all that talk about atomic bombs and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Serious baggage. But gimme a break. I wanna remember the silly and stupid escapades of three guys who grew up in a special time, in a special place. Benjamin Gee Tim Lee, Roland Zippy Ching, and Russell Makoto Shima. But we changed. Hawai`i changed too. And now we're linked together only in memories. Of course, there's also Sharon, Donna, and Ruby. But that's another story. I see all our lives as a movie, but we can't cut and splice and edit to make that perfect life, can we? But we keep trying. Maybe someday I'll get it right. And anyway you always see something new in your life every time you play it back. And I'll always remember my days in the fifties with Zippy and Ben. And I won't let them forget either. Well, see you around in L˙A˙ Read my movie reviews — if you can find them.

(SHIMA smiles, then exits.)

THE END